

Fear loss of faith in U.S.

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WASHINGTON — The shooting of George C. Wallace has kindled more than the sense of shock and apprehension associated with an irrational assassination attempt.

Political leaders here were more concerned about the depth of alienation and estrangement obviously abroad in the land. The long-range impact of the shooting on the nation's morale, its faith in the political process and the nature of the 1972 presidential campaign was deeply troubling.

That the victim was a maverick candidate whose appeal was seen by many as being divisive and provocative, added an element of uncertainty to the political landscape. The excitement generated by Wallace was generally considered to contain a hostile note, with racial and regional overtones.

THE CHORUS of official and personal outrage over the shooting failed to still the disquiet that the nation may be headed into another season of political turmoil. This was reflected in the calls for national unity, from President Nixon down.

"Our nation has suffered more than enough already from the intrusion of violence into its political processes," the President said. "We must all stand together to eliminate its vicious threat from our public life; we must not permit

the shadow of violence to fall over our country again."

Illinois Democratic Sen. Adlai Stevenson III said "every act of violence in our politics defames the character of our society. There is no place for violence in the politics of a free people."

Wallace figured to go into the Democratic convention with well more than 300 delegates, and often indicated he expected to get "deferential

treatment" at the convention from party regulars.

Although the likelihood of his making a race under his old banner of the American Independent Party had diminished, he kept open that threat if the Democrats sought to ignore him at Miami Beach.

MOST DEMOCRATS, while beguiled by his strength among working class voters, thought that Wallace could somehow be placated at the convention without the party's either yielding to his demands for a platform to his liking or bargaining for his delegate votes.

Political experts have reasoned that if Wallace mounted a third-party candidacy, as he did in 1968, it would hurt Mr. Nixon more than the Democrats this time around, because Republican politicians believe Mr. Nixon's chances in the South in November are excellent.

But there was less concern Tuesday about the mathematics of the Wallace candidacy than about the forces of ferment and discontent that his campaign fed upon and exploited. Wallace's incapacity, it is feared, will not stifle those forces, although nobody could be sure what turn they will now take.